DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 379 638 CS 012 045

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TITLE Sex-Role Stereotypes in Children's Literature and Their Effect on Reading Comprehension.
PUB DATE Apr 95
NOTE 106p.; M.A. Project, Kean College of New Jersey.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses - Undetermined (040)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Childrens Literature; Grade 4; Intermediate Grades; Public Schools; *Reading Comprehension; Reading Research; Sex Differences; *Sex Role; *Sex Stereotypes; Urban Education
IDENTIFIERS New York City Board of Education

ABSTRACT

A study focused on whether literary character sex role stereotyping in children's literature had a negative or positive effect on reading comprehension. It was hypothesized that no significant differences exist in the comprehension of a mixed gender population when reading about characters in non-traditional sex roles. It was further hypothesized that no significant difference would exist in comprehension when males and females were analyzed separately. The sample included 20 male and 20 female below average children enrolled in a typical New York City public school. The children, who ranged in age from 8.5 to 9.3 years, were of either Black or Hispanic origin and of low socioeconomic backgrounds, read a total of 12 stories. Six selections portrayed male and female characters in traditional occupational roles. The other six selections portrayed male and female characters in non-traditional occupational roles. Results indicated that: (1) there was a significant difference in comprehension for the mixed gender population when reading about characters in non-traditional sex roles as opposed to characters portrayed in traditional sex roles; (2) the same results were true for the male population; but (3) the results for the female population supported the hypothesis of no significant difference in comprehension. (Contains 37 references and 3 tables of data. Appendixes present the reading selections and questions, and a data list.) (RS)

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ED 379 638

# Sex - Role Stereotypes in Children's Literature and Their Effect on Reading Comprehension

by

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Accepted 3/29/95

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Master of Arts in Reading
Kean College of New Jersey
April, 1995

CS012045

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**Abstract**

The aim of the study was to focus on whether literary character sex role stereotyping in children's literature had a negative or positive effect on reading comprehension. The researcher hypothesized there would not be a significant difference in the comprehension of a mixed gender population when reading about characters in non-traditional sex roles. It was further hypothesized there would be no significant difference in comprehension when males and females were analyzed separately.

The sample included twenty male and twenty female children of low socio-economic backgrounds. They ranged in age from 8.5 to 9.3 years old. The children read a total of twelve stories. Six selections portrayed male and female characters in traditional occupational roles. The other sex selections portrayed male and female characters in non-traditional occupational roles.

Results of the study evidenced two findings. First, there was a significant difference in comprehension for the mixed gender population when reading about characters in non-traditional sex roles as opposed to characters portrayed in traditional sex roles. The same results were true for the male population. In contrast, the results for the female population did support the hypothesis of no significant difference in comprehension. Limitations of the study include its small scale, possible spontaneous retrieval and researcher bias.

**Acknowledgments**

Firstly, to the New York City Board of Education who has always acted as an impediment to all teachers. This bureaucracy has the inimitable ludicrousness of requiring its most educated teachers to get more education, and its least educated teachers to get none. In completing this thesis and ultimately achieving a Master of Arts in Reading with a perfect index, I am now free to pursue any further educational endeavors without being harrassed by an inane bureaucracy who knows nothing of what education is all about.

Secondly, to Dr. Albert Mazurkiewicz, I thank you for your guidance in preparing this thesis.

Thirdly, to Dr. Joan Kastner, who has been my professor for many of my graduate courses, I thank you both for what you have taught me and for always being one of the kindest and most gracious persons I know.

To Julie, Nancy and Jo-Ann, my comrades in graduate school, I thank you for your friendship and encouragement.

To my husband Neal, and my children Evan and Amanda, I thank you for your lessons on how to use the computer, and your coming to my aid when I

demonstrated I did not understand those lessons very well. I also appreciate those " on - line " times you gave up so I was able to complete this thesis.

To my wonderful canine friend " Lady " who came into my life almost three years ago, I would not have been able to complete this project without your support and your unconditional love. You have gotten me through all the bad times by always staying by my side and bolstering my spirits.

Finally, to all the children who have reading problems, it is my fervent hope that what I have learned will enable me to help you to achieve new heights in literacy.

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Does the old saying, "Sugar and spice and everything nice; that's what little girls are made of....Frogs and toads and puppy dog tails; that's what little boys are made of" still hold true for the nineties? The tremendous impetus of affirmative action and women's liberation has forced educators to question the literature children are reading during the elementary school informative years. Does sex stereotyping have a negative effect on comprehension because a conflict of values exists? Years ago, most young girls grew up learning it is not feminine to be strong, and most young boys grew up learning it was not masculine to be emotional. Children also grew up learning that a woman's role was to care for her husband and children, while the role of men was to work hard and support their families. Thus, it was acceptable for literature to portray boys as non-emotional and interested in typical male occupations. Today, with the impact of more and more women in corporate business, the occupational line has been crossed. Therefore, a conflict exists between what children are reading and what is going on in the world around them. Does this conflict affect children's reading comprehension and cause them to reflect upon what they see and hear in the society in which they are immersed?

Throughout history, researchers have studied and theorized sex role identification. In 1969, Mussen wrote about children learning appropriate sex role behavior based on differentiated employment of rewards and punishments.

Hillman's study in 1974 was based on the assumption that literature plays a meaningful role in shaping a child's cognitive and emotional growth. She stated a child may be learning or adding to preconceived notions about his gender identity while reading books. The reading process allows children to identify with models who exhibit sex role behavior. This study suggests characterizations in literature have not kept pace with changes in sex role standards

Oliver ( 1974 ) pointed out children learn sex role identification and expectations from the books they read. They learn what standards of behavior are acceptable. Given the importance of books in forming children's values, it is important that negative sex role stereotyping be eliminated. Scott ( 1979) also emphasized the powerful impact of books on children's actions and attitudes particularly when identification with the main character occurs.

In 1980, Nancy Schubert studied "Sex Role Stereotyping in Caldecott Award Books." She found seven major categories of blatant stereotyping. These categories included males depicted as brave, having a wide range of occupations, and refusing to engage in anything domestic. Females are depicted as emotional, domestic, and dependent upon their looks for achievement. In addition, Weiller and Higgs in 1989 investigated 1,380 books containing sports activities. They found these books depicted prescribed participation in certain sports and activities for girls and for boys. In 1990, Langeman summarized research in reading

preferences of boys and girls. She related the relationship of those preferences to reading ability.

More recently, Henshaw, Kelly and Gratton ( 1992 ) found children clearly differentiated between toys, hobbies, occupations and colors that were suitable for males and females. Additionally, they found male children are more "gender - typed" than female children. Kortenhaus and Demarest in 1993 pointed out that throughout recent years, children's literature has depicted men and women more equally, but females are as passively dependent as fifty years ago.

It is obvious from all the research that children's literature encompasses many stories which contain sex role stereotyping. Does this type of stereotyping affect students' reading comprehension?

To develop information on this topic, a study was conducted to compare traditional and non-traditional sex roles in literary characters and to determine whether reading comprehension is positively or negatively affected by literary character sex role stereotyping.

## Hypothesis

It was hypothesized that there would not be a significant difference in reading comprehension scores of below average fourth grade students when they read about characters in non-traditional sex roles as opposed to characters in

traditional sex roles. It was further hypothesized that there would be no difference in comprehension scores for boys than for girls.

## Procedures

Forty students, twenty boys and twenty girls were selected for this study. All forty students were of either Black or Hispanic origin and of low socio-economic backgrounds. The children were selected from a typical fourth grade class in a New York City public school. Their ages ranged from 8.5 to 9.3 years old. These students were all reading either at grade level or one year below grade level based on the New York City Degrees of Reading Power Test administered in April, 1994.

A causal - comparative descriptive research design based on analysis of variable relationships was used for this study ( Best, J. and Kahn, J., 1993). This method involves comparing samples that may be different on a critical variable, but are otherwise comparable. Since the sample that was selected was from the same school, the same grade, had similar reading levels, and were from the same socio-economic backgrounds, the only variables being manipulated were the influences of sex roles.

Twelve reading selections from various sources were excerpted and adapted according to the sex roles of the characters. ( Appendix A ). One adaptation included changing the names of the characters to ethnic names with whom the students could identify. Six of the selections depicted characters in non-traditional sex roles, and six of the selections depicted characters in traditional sex roles. The stories were all of similar length. In order to control for the variable occurring in reading, such as difficulty of language and level of interest, the selections remained constant except for the change in name for the character portrayed in the particular sex role.

Six non-traditional sex role selections were administered first. Three of these stories showed females in non-traditional sex roles, and the other three stories depicted males in non-traditional sex roles. There were also ten reading comprehension questions given at the end of each story. These comprehension questions included three literal , four interpretative, and three critical thinking or evaluative comprehension questions. The questions were all short answer, utilizing both multiple choice and true- false design.

The six non - traditional sex role selections were read and administered over a two day period. On both days, the examiner first orally read the story to the children. This was done to eliminate any readability factors. The children were then instructed to silently read the selection. After everyone was finished, the

examiner orally read the comprehension questions and the choice of answers. The students were instructed to select and circle the best answer to each of the ten questions. This procedure was repeated for the other two stories. On the second day, three additional non-traditional sex role stories were administered in the exact same manner as on the previous day.

Since the stories remained constant except for the change of either masculine or feminine characters, in order to ensure no spontaneous retrieval, a three week period of delay was imposed before administering the six traditional sex role stories. Three of these stories portrayed females in traditional sex roles, and the other three portrayed males in traditional sex roles. The stories and comprehension questions were administered over two days in the exact same manner as the previous set of six stories.

All twelve comprehension question and answer sheets were collected and scored on a ten point scale according to the number of correct answers for each story. The scores on the six non-traditional role stories were combined for each student and placed on a master data list. The scores on the six traditional role stories were also combined for each student and placed on a master data list. The master data list also grouped the female students in the sample separately from the male students in the sample. The total scores on each of the two variables were the used to perform a t-test on correlated samples.

## Results and Conclusions

The reading comprehension scores for both the six non-traditional sex role stories and the six traditional sex role stories were collected, tabulated, and placed on a master data list. Female subject scores were separated from male subject scores. Three t - tests were utilized. The first compared female subjects reading comprehension scores on non - traditional and traditional sex roles. The second t - test compared male subjects comprehension scores on non - traditional and traditional sex roles, and the third t - test compared the entire samples (male and female together ) comprehension on non-traditional and traditional sex role stories.

To interpret the hypothesis that there will not be a significant difference in reading comprehension scores of below average fourth grade students ( male and female together ) when reading about characters in non - traditional sex roles as opposed to characters in traditional sex roles, the means of the sample were analyzed for significant difference. Table I illustrates the results and indicates that there was a mean difference of 2.63 which resulted in a t of 2.07. This was significant below the .05 level.

Table I

Mean, Standard Deviation and t of the Comprehension of Mixed Gender Sample

| | M | SD | t |
|---|---|---|---|
| Non-Traditional | 48.92 | 5.96 | -2.07 |
| Traditional | 51.55 | 5.36 | |

Sig < .05 Level

An analysis of the difference in comprehension when the factor of gender was considered, resulted in the following data:

Table II

Mean, Standard Deviation and t of The Comprehension of Female Sample

| | M | SD | t |
|---|---|---|---|
| Non-Traditional | 49.20 | 5.84 | 0.60 |
| Traditional | 50.25 | 5.27 | |

NS

Table II compares the comprehension achieved by the female portion of the population. The modest difference of 1.05 between the samples resulted in a t of 0.60 which was found to be not significant, and as can be seen, there is only a modest difference between the means of the comprehension scores of the female subjects in this study.

The results obtained from the male subjects were markedly different. The mean difference between the samples was 6.70. This resulted in a t of 2.65, which was found to be significant not only below .05 level of significance, but also below the .02 level.

Table III
Mean, Standard Deviation and t of Comprehension of Male Subjects

| | M | SD | t |
|---|---|---|---|
| Non-Traditional | 48.65 | 6.22 | 2.65 |
| Traditional | 55.35 | 4.94 | |

Sig. < .02 Level

**Conclusions and Implications**

Several conclusions and implications for future research may be drawn from the results of this study. The major hypothesis that there would not be a significant difference in the comprehension of a mixed gender population was rejected. An analysis of the data by gender supported the hypothesis that differences in the male sample would be found, but was rejected for the female sample. Based on the findings, it appears that sex roles in reading materials do not influence the reading comprehension of females. This finding supports Henshaw, Kelly and Gratton's fairly recent study ( 1992 ) that male children are

more "gender - typed" than female children. Perhaps another reason for this finding is the decrease in gender bias in current children's readers found by Purcell and Stewart ( 1990 ). If the girls were accustomed to reading literature that was not flagrantly biased, then maybe they saw nothing wrong with a character portrayed as a female pilot or a male nurse.

The important finding in this study is the significant difference found in the comprehension of non - traditional and traditional sex role stories among the male subjects. Much of the research seems to support this finding. For example, Nadelman ( 1973 ) found that on tests of occupational aspirations and preferences, boys were found to be more stereotyped in their thinking than were girls. Additionally, Henshaw, Kelly and Gratton ( 1992 ) found male gender roles were perceived to be more inflexible than female roles. Perhaps it is for these reasons that the boys in this research study found it easier to comprehend the traditional sex role stories.

The significant difference for the entire sample is also an important finding, but not as important as the finding for the male sample. The reason for this is since the sample consisted of twenty boys and twenty girls, the boys' results were an influencing factor in the results for the entire sample. On the other hand, a possible explanation for these findings is that the sex role stereotype may provide the reader with an organizational framework to comprehend new

information. This framework enables children to perceive male and female story characters as representative of the categories of boys or girls and therefore the subjects may have been better prepared to comprehend the traditional stories. Another explanation for these results may be if the information contained in the stories was at odds with established, preconceived stereotypes, the subjects may have had difficulty responding to the non - traditional comprehension questions.

The results and conclusions of this study bring forth many implications for future research. Firstly, the order of administering the stories may have been an influencing factor. The non - traditional stories were administered first. There was a three week delay and then the same stories were administered using a change of name and sex role for the main character. As a result, there may have been some spontaneous retrieval. A future study should take this into account and divide the group of forty into four groups of ten and vary the order of the stories by using some traditional and some non - traditional sex roles in the first testing period and then doing the same for the second testing period.

Another possible implication is perhaps the person administering the tests was inadvertently biased. Since the stories and question and answer choices were read aloud, it is possible that tone of voice may have in some cases indicated possible answers. This would be overcome by utilizing another level recorded

reader for all four groups. The recordings could be analyzed to ensure no bias was being projected.

Other influencing factors in this study are the role models with whom the subjects in the sample identify. As Purcell and Stewart ( 1990 ) noted role models who purport role definitions that are too narrow or rigid can be harmful to a child's development. It is possible the role models for the male subjects rigidly defined the boys' sex roles. This could have influenced not only the male subject results, but also the results for the entire sample. Thus, the size of the sample may have been a limitation of this study. Future studies should utilize a larger sample. Also, longitudinal studies which integrate more sophisticated research designs and match randomly selected control and experimental groups should be conducted to determine not only the effects of environmental, parent and peer pressures on the formation and development of sex roles, but also the impact of the school environment and the reading materials children are required to read.

Educational implications of this study suggest a need to focus on introducing to children a variety of good literature which does not contain sex stereotypes. The groundwork for a healthy adjustment must be laid early in infancy and childhood. The role models and behavior patterns portrayed in children's literature can have a great impact on children's self images. Role options should be expanded, not negated. If children do indeed related literature

to their lives. the implications are profound because they will have in their own lives a freedom from dependency on only traditional sex roles. Even more importantly, if stereotyping is removed, then children are free to read with greater understanding and with greater enjoyment thereby inculcating a love of reading that will hopefully last a lifetime!

**Sex - Role Stereotypes and Reading Comprehension: Related Literature**

Research about sex role stereotyping or gender bias in children's literature focuses on three major areas: the development of sex role stereotypes or social learning theory, the evidence and influence of gender bias within children's literature itself, and the content of reading materials with subsequent impact for change. With the exception of social learning or psychological theory, research from the 1960's through 1993 has evidenced dramatic change both in content and in attitude toward gender bias.

According to social learning theory, masculinity and femininity are not simply the result of one's birth as a male or a female (Baldwin, 1967; Bandura and Walters, 1963). The gender role is assigned to the child at the moment of birth. Based upon the role being either male or female, a set of appropriate rules is established for the child. Children adopt the particular role based upon reinforcements given to them by their role models. Therefore, appropriate sex role development presumably results from sex designation at birth and the subsequent imposition of a number of training practices and modeling experiences that shape behavior so specific masculine or feminine qualities will emerge (Rosenberg, 1972).

Based upon this theory, the child learns that appropriate sex role behaviors are those for which only one sex is typically rewarded. The social learning theory of sex role development is based upon a reward and punishment system. Rewards and punishments are doled out with the intention of producing sex appropriate behavior with the context of social structures such as the family group or the peer group. This learning is subsequently generalized to one's response to others (Mussen, 1969).

Most theories of identification deal with the significance of the parent as a role model. Through the process of imitation, the child acquires traits, characteristics and a value system similar to the parent. In normal development, the male child is assumed to identify with the father, and the female child with the mother (Hetherington, 1965).

Hetherington (1965) investigated the effects of parental dominance on sex role preferences. It was found parental dominance influenced sex role preference. More appropriate sex role preferences occurred when the father was dominant than when the mother was dominant. Furthermore, boys develop masculine sex role preferences at an earlier age than girls develop feminine sex role preferences. Since the feminine role is less well defined, Hetherington states that for the masculine role, dominant or passive behavior is much more acceptable than is passivity in fathers.

Gender identity, or categorizing oneself as a male or a female, is the critical and basic organizer of sex role attitudes. The idea that concepts of gender identity play a critical role in children's sex role development is the central thesis underlying Kohlberg's "cognitive - developmental" theory of sex role development ( Kohlberg, 1966).It is the child's recognition of his or her sex assignment as permanent and irreversible that leads to identification with and attachment to the same - sexed parent.

The acquisition of concepts about sex roles begins at an early age. By the age of three, children can correctly apply gender labels (Thompson, 1975). Additionally, they have developed toy preferences and have learned there are activities appropriate for each sex ( Kohlberg, 1966 ). However, little is known about the ages at which beliefs about sex appropriate abilities, activities and behaviors are acquired. Flerx, Fidler and Rogers ( 1976 ) decided to investigate the development of a wide range of sex role stereotypes in three, four and five year old males and females. Their study revealed that while some aspects of sex role stereotypes may be inferred to be present at three years of age, other aspects are acquired between the ages of three and five. The four and five year old children displayed more of the traditional stereotypes than did the three year old children.

Nadelman ( 1973 ) also worked with sex identity in children. Recall, knowledge and preference for masculine and feminine items were tested in 240 five and eight year old Caucasian boys and girls from both working class and professional middle class families. Her results showed that children recalled, knew and preferred same sex items significantly more than opposite sex items. Boys' scores were more rigidly sex typed than were the girls' scores. Nadelman also found older children demonstrated greater stereotypy in preference tests than did younger children, although the five year old children did have definite sex role preferences. In addition, the middle class subjects had higher knowledge and recall than did the working class subjects.

Henshaw, Kelly and Gratton's recent study ( 1992 ) focused on attitudes or rationale of thinking in regard to gender - type behaviors. She found the children in her sample clearly differentiated between toys, hobbies, occupations and colors that were suitable for males and females. Moreover, male gender roles were perceived to be more inflexible than female roles and activities thus supporting the hypothesis that male children are more "gender - typed" than female children.

Williams, Bennett and Best (1973) did an empirical investigation of the development of sex role stereotypes among children at kindergarten and elementary school. This study concluded that knowledge of sex stereotypes appear to develop on a similar manner among both boys and girls. Kindergarten

children demonstrate an appreciable degree of knowledge of adult sex stereotypes. This knowledge increases up to second grade, but shows no further increase during third and fourth grade. Williams et al label this period a "latency period."

Whiting and Edwards ( 1973 ) did a cross- cultural analysis of the sex differences in the behavior of children aged three to eleven. They found that insulting, rough and tumble play and egotistical domination are the most clearly masculine types of behavior in the three to six year old group. The seeking of or offering of physical contact and the seeking of help were found to be the most clearly feminine types of behavior. In the seven to eleven age group, nurturing becomes a clearly feminine characteristic, and aggression is very clearly masculine.

Koblinsky, Cruse and Sugawara ( 1978 ) define the sex role stereotype as "a constellation of generalized expectations about the traits and behaviors of the members of each sex." Their study set out not to document the existence of such stereotypes, but rather to examine children's memory for such stereotyping in their reading material. The results of their study clearly indicate that both sexes remembered more of the masculine traits associated with male characters and the feminine traits associated with female characters . They particularly did not remember any feminine traits associated with male characters.

Kroop and Halverson ( 1983 ) are in agreement with Marcus and Overton that societal expectations may account for children's preferences for stereotyped stories. Their research confirmed Kohlberg's cognitive developmental theory. The girls in their study preferred the stories with the female characters and female activities, and the boys preferred the stories with the male characters and male activities. After the initial first choice, second choice was based on activity rather than sex of character. This was true for both boys and girls.

Collins ( 1984 ) agrees with Flerx et al and Papalia and Tennent about the significance of sociological influence in the development of children's sex roles. The way children view themselves, their treatment by others, and behavioral expectations are all of paramount importance in the development of sex role identity.Collins summarizes the research of Papalia and Tennent and of Hillman which indicate that the male is aggressive and the female is passive, both in society and in the literature that society produces.

Kinman and Henderson ( 1985 ) refer to Erikson's stages of child development. Stages two through five when a child is establishing a sense of identity and social order is most important when considering the literature a child reads. Just as important as the sociological and psychological implications inherent in social learning theory, is the literature that children ultimately read. This literature, in turn, influences the way in which children perceive themselves

(Purcell and Stewart, 1990). The following four assumptions are based upon Purcell and Stewart's theory of the significance of literature's role in children's self perceptions:

1. Sex roles are learned behavior and are not solely biologically defined.
2. Sex role definitions can be learned from role models included people presented in media such as picture books, storybooks and films.
3. Role definitions that are too narrow or rigid can be harmful to a child's development.
4. Such narrowly defined sex -role definitions have been found by prior research in children's literature (Purcell and Stewart, 1990, 178).

With the relevance and importance of social learning theory of sex role stereotypes being established, attention is now turned to the presence and influence of gender bias and sex role stereotyping in children's literature.

During the seventies, a plethora of research studied the number of male and female characters, the number of pictures assigned to each sex, the occupational roles and activities of the characters portrayed in children's literature.

Frasher and Walker ( 1972 ) used content analysis to compare roles, activities, and importance assigned to male and female characters in children's reading series up to and including second grade reading level. They found a majority of stories had males as main characters. Males were shown in various occupations by a four to one margin over females. In addition, the occupational list for males was long and varied as opposed to the female list which depicted females in traditional jobs of the times such as teacher, librarian, or airline flight attendant. Fathers were depicted in the role of leadership, while mothers were shown staying indoors performing various household activities. Boys were shown in dominant roles, while girls were shown as dependent, fragile beings.

Hillman ( 1974 ) indicated the importance of studying gender bias by her belief that children add to already preconceived notions about their own gender identity while reading books. The reading process enables the child to confront diverse opinions and to identify with models who exhibit sex role behavior. She examined literature over a span of thirty years, the 1930's, the mid - 1960's, up to the mid- 1970's. Her investigation consisted of similar issues to Frasher's investigation. She, too, examined the number of males and females, the diversity of occupational roles, and the differences between behaviors attributed to males and females. Hillman did find both the number of males exceeding the number of females and a wider range of occupations for males. She did, however also find

some significant changes in behaviors and emotions of the males and females portrayed in the literature over the span of thirty years. Stereotypic traits were much more prevalent in the earlier years than in the seventies. Over the course of three decades, Hillman found a broadening of sex role standards.

Even though Hillman found this broadening of sex role standards, a study done by Women on Words and Images ( 1975 ) indicated men and boys continued to dominate both illustrations and text in the elementary school readers. There was some growth in that boys were shown slightly more often as passive and dependent, but girls were still not depicted as active or independent, although there were fewer pictures of girls in aprons.

A similar study was done by Marten and Matlin ( 1976 ). Again, an analysis of the sex of the main character, the number of males and females in illustrations, and the activities for each sex was analyzed. They found an increase in the number of females portrayed, but the increase was ever so slight. Additionally, activities for females had not changed much for the period studied. Masculine traits such as independence and initiative has remained the same, reserved for males only.

Schulwitz ( 1976 ) stated a positive factor emanating from both research and the feminist movement was an increased awareness of sexism and gender bias evident in elementary school readers. She pinpointed the major categories of

sexist writing to include portrayal of females in limited roles, negative characteristics of females such as weak, dependent, talkative; the absence of female achievement and limited occupational roles.

Knell and Winer ( 1979 ) also studied the effects of reading content on occupational sex role stereotypes. The relation between sex and occupational role of story characters was systematically varied in reading material presented to preschoolers. The main finding was that girls who were read stories depicting traditional correlations between the sex of the worker and the type of occupation demonstrated more stereotyped behavior than the control group who were read stories with atypical relations between sex and occupation. It was also found that the nontraditional stories failed to strongly affect either the boys or the girls. This was probably due to the fact that the information contained in these stories was at odds with established stereotypes. The results of this study suggest that reading material may affect the development of attitudes, especially by reinforcing ideas or beliefs from other sources.

An occupational role study by Ashby and Wittmaier ( 1978 ) illustrates the importance of the type of role models girls are exposed to in the literature they read. The sample involved fourth grade girls who read stories about women in traditional occupations such as homemaker, dancer, and teacher. The other group read stories about women in nontraditional occupations such as carpenter, or gas

station attendant. The girls in this study who read stories about women in traditional roles showed a clear tendency to make more traditional, stereotypical responses than the girls who read stories about nontraditional women. The girls in the first group preferred pictures of women in traditional roles and indicated that traditionally female jobs sounded more appealing than the nontraditional jobs. The authors suggest by widening the range of options available to females in children's books, one may hope to widen the range of options that girls will consider appropriate for themselves.

Engel ( 1981 ) did a follow - up study to the Nilsen study on Caldecott Medal and Honor books. She did a character and image count and also analyzed the clothing and role of the characters. It was found that not much had changed since the Nilsen study; females were still given unequal treatment even in these award winning books. Dougherty and Engel ( 1987 ) , in a similar study of Caldecott books, confirmed the existence of traditional views; however, they found there was also a trend toward more sex equality.

Another study on Caldecott books was done by Williams, Vernon, Williams and Malecha ( 1987 ). They concluded that although males still appeared more often in the literature, the ratio of male to female characters has narrowed considerably. One - third of the central characters were female, and females have moved outside the home, but still not yet into the labor force. The

females were portrayed more as colorless than with any specific types of behavior assigned to them.

Collins, Ingoldsby and Dellmann ( 1984 ) contended that as females became more involved in the work force, children's literature reflected this movement. They hypothesized that preschool literature reflected this change by having more females present in central roles, illustrations and titles. They found the ratio of males to females not yet equal , but certainly a great deal narrower in scope. They also found when women are portrayed in a central role, they are nontraditional, but when not portrayed in a central role, they take on characteristics of traditional female stereotypes. Additionally, they found women authors tend to be more sexist than male authors.

Newbery Medal Award books from 1977 to 1984 were studied by Kinman and Henderson ( 1985 ) using a content analysis method. They found an increase in the number of female characters along with more positive images portrayed. The conclusion was drawn that authors are more cognizant of the society in which children live and therefore deliberately try to avoid gender bias.

Purcell and Stewart ( 1990 ) also found a decrease in gender bias in recent children's readers. They noted that while the ratio of male to female characters in 1972 was 3 to 1, their research data indicated it was now 4 to 3. In addition, they found the newer biographies also contained a more equal representation of men

and women. They concluded that while there have been great strides in eliminating gender bias, girls are still depicted as needing rescuing by males.

Another study by Kortenhaus and Demarest ( 1993 ) contrasted recent picture books with prior picture books in an effort to determine if gender bias is still as prevalent. Both frequency of illustrations and roles of characters were analyzed. They selected both Caldecott books from the 1940s through the 1980s and nonaward winning books selected randomly. Their results indicated that prior to 1970, there were in both Caldecott and nonaward books twice as many boys than girls in illustrations and central roles and four times as many boys than girls in titles. In addition, there were four times as many boy animals portrayed than female animals. After 1970, the literature shows a more equitable distribution in all categories, but males are still listed in titles two to one over girls. Kortenhaus and Demarest concluded that an effort has been made in the last two decades to decrease the gender bias portrayed in children's literature, at least as far as illustrations and occupations are concerned. They are , however, concerned that this effort is a mere tip of the iceberg. They claim current children's literature still does not recognize the role of the working mother. In addition, males are still represented as active, and females as passive. In essence, the literature of today does not come near to approximating what exists in the society in which we live.

It is evident a number of studies done over the past three decades have indicated the presence of gender bias by counting illustrations, by listing whether a male or a female appears in the title, by listing if the portrayal of occupations is typically male or female, or by clarifying the role of the characters as either typically male or female. Other people have claimed perhaps this is not the correct approach. Kingston and Lovelace ( 1977 - 78) found fault with much of the prior research. They reviewed 78 articles and found them to be over - simplified and subjective. Instead of focusing on numbers, researchers should focus on the "total personality of the men and women or boys and girls portrayed" (136). Kingston and Lovelace concluded that most researchers hone in on rather insignificant aspects of stereotyping instead of viewing the problem from the perspective of its impact on the motivation and learning of children.

Levstik ( 1983 ) agrees perhaps researchers' interpretations are a bit skewed. She has pointed out that children's literature prior to the nineteenth century depicted women as saints. However, with the dawning of *Little Women*, all rules of ladylike conduct were broken with the birth of Jo March. Jo March was a stereotype, but not of the passive female; rather she was the personification of the tomboy. If anything, she was defiant of all the rules befitting a lady. She was not

willing to adhere to socially restricted rules and regulations. Levstik has made it clear that at least Louisa May Alcott cannot be accused of gender bias.

Frasher ( 1977 ) also disclaimed the purpose of studies of gender bias based on numerical count. In 1950, the character of Pippi Longstocking appeared Frasher has indicated that Pippi is perhaps the most liberated and least feminine of all female characters, yet the boys portrayed in the book are very stereotyped. Frasher predicted that most of the girls in her sample of third grade children would select Pippi as their favorite character. It was also predicted that some of the boys in the sample would select Pippi as their favorite character because Pippi is the most colorful character. In addition, it was predicted that some boys would choose a male character as their favorite because that would be expected of them. The results of this study indicated that boys do not reject female characters just because they are female. More significantly, the "personality, behavior, and story context of characters clearly play as great, if not a greater role than sex in influencing or determining children's enjoyment of stories" ( 863 ).

Based on the literature and current societal trends, a need arises to change the content of children's readers to confirm to the changing sex roles of society. All children's literature, whether they be basal readers or trade books, should reflect a sensitivity to the needs and rights of girls and boys without preference or bias. Back in 1975, Women on Words and Images said literature should respect

all people as human. What is wrong with a man or boy showing emotion? Stories should feature women outside the home independently working. Blatant bias must be erased. When Dick can speak of his feeling of tenderness without embarrassment, and Jane can reveal her career ambitions without shame or guilt, then the goal of eliminating stereotyping in readers would have been accomplished. ( Women on Words and Images, 1975 ).

Jennings' study ( 1975 ) resulted in her criticizing books which display blatant gender bias. She studied the effects of sex typing on preference and recall and found a significant number of both males and females preferred the story which displayed "appropriate" behavior for the sex. Higher scores for recall were obtained for the story where the character's sex role was atypical. She concluded literature could be improved if future literature took into account a realistic rather than a narrow view of reality. In essence, women's roles should not be so rigidly portrayed.

Schulwitz ( 1976 ) honed in on how to deal with the problem of sex stereotyping. She said that it is a given the problem exists. Therefore, it is up to teachers as professionals to deal with the problem by thoroughly researching all reading materials that are utilized by making sure the book both reflects contemporary roles and reflects the strengths of both males and females. Also, teachers should not only modify their own individual attitudes as the material is

being taught, but also modify or change the story after reading it in order to reflect an equal balance of the sexes.

Scott ( 1980 ) focused on the growing importance of gender bias awareness. She summarized various studies that indicate literature containing gender bias has a significant impact on the developing sex role attitudes of children. She found that a vast majority of the research indicates that children's reading comprehension is negatively influenced by literature which contain masculine generic terminology. It was concluded that the use of either neutral or specific terminology rather than masculine generic terminology would abet the this particular aspect of a reading comprehension problem Scott also drew the conclusion that children have much to gain from an increased presence of female characters and female language in the literature they read. Children exposed to such literature will develop more flexible attitudes about appropriate role behavior for each sex. Scott has also indicated that change is slow in coming because of time and cost factors and because publishers may be unsure of the reception by the general public.

After establishing the unequal portrayal of females in Caldecott Medal and Honor books, Engel ( 1981 ) said a need for change was apparent. Even though the Caldecott books are award winning books, they are still lacking in the components necessary for appropriate sex role identity and therefore are lacking

in reality. Dougherty ( 1987 ) has also confirmed that while Caldecott books do have rich literary qualities and do reflect some changes toward equality of sexes, these changes are not enough. Engel ( 1981 ) stated the importance of every adult, including parents and educators to select books without gender bias so children can develop appropriate sex roles. Rupley ( 1981 ) also confirmed the importance of teachers previewing both basal readers and trade books and taking corrective action to prevent the development of inappropriate sex role identity.

Rigg ( 1985 ) has stated that a step in the right direction would be for every school and public library to utilize Joan Newman's annotated bibliography, *Girls are People Too*! Rigg condemned Cinderella as a wimpy girl. In her article, she categorizes various female literary characters as "spunky". Future female literary characters should emulate Alice, Dorothy, Heidi, Helga and Pippi, to name just a few. Rigg has concluded, children need to read not only tales about witches, but rather stories about spunky girls because " spunky gals demonstrate what it can mean to be the best of feminine" (160 ).

Fox ( 1993 ), a famous children's author, has also cried out for the need for change from a different perspective. While it is true that girls are depicted as passive nurturers, and boys as active participators, there is an inherent fallacy as far as boys are concerned. We are led to believe that boys can do anything;

however, they are not allowed to cry. Fox has claimed that men need liberating too and has asked the question, "Could children's literature be partly to blame for trapping males in a frightful emotional prison and demanding intolerable social expectations of them?" (85). It is therefore concluded that children's literature should portray both men and women in realistic roles and teachers should not sit passively accept whatever literature is chosen for them to teach.

Similarly, Temple ( 1993 ) also has taken the "flip side." In a study of sex roles in stories, particularly of *Beauty and the Beast*, he has stated that the role of educators is not to ban books because of gender bias, but rather to teach children to critically evaluate the books they read. He has raised the question, what if Beauty had been ugly? It is of paramount importance to teach children to argue with what they read and raise questions themselves.

Jett-Simpson and Masland ( 1993 ) after studying children's storytelling, also concluded that the teacher's role is of utmost importance in confronting gender bias. They have stated that teachers should utilize the language arts classroom to its fullest extent in order to depict a more equitable portray of gender equality. This may be done by the formulation of heterogeneous literature study groups where children cooperatively share ideas. Males and females would take turns being the leader of the group. Most importantly, teachers should generate

group discussion questions whereby the children can not only be aware of gender bias, but also can explore alternative possibilities.

The research from the 1970s through 1993 has all indicated the need for both change and awareness of the detrimental aspects of sex stereotyping in children's literature. While most educators are cognizant of gender bias, other adults must be both informed and educated in what to do about the problem. While great strides have been taken, particularly in the 1980s and currently in the 1990s, constant attention must still be paid to children's literature that will be published in the future. In the words of Purcell and Stewart ( 1990 ), "By improving the quality of role models, we improve the quality of children's lives, and we improve the quality of tomorrow" (184).

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**Appendices**

**Appendix A - Reading Selections and Questions**

Excerpted and adapted from Carla Greene's "I Want to Be a Ballet Dancer".

"Kick high, kick low and away I go," said Luis. I am a goose. I can be anything when I dance. Now I am an elephant running to a river."

"Everyone can understand a story told by a dance, and a story told by music or pictures," said Dad. "The dance is a very old way to tell a story. Indians danced to tell the story of a big hunt. Almost every country has its own dances. Italy, France, England and America have the most famous ballet dancers."

Ballet is a form of entertainment which consists of a series of dances. These dances are performed to music. They tell a story or express a mood or idea, usually without words. The man who invents and arranges the dancing is called the choreographer. The ballet usually makes use of beautiful costumes, scenery and lighting effects. Ballet is a dance which belongs to no one land. For hundreds of years, the steps in ballet have been about the same in all countries.

One day Luis and his dad went to see a ballet. "Oh, how beautiful!" said Luis. "I want to be a ballet dancer, and float along on my toes."

So, when Luis was seven years old, he went to ballet school. But he did not float on his toes. First, he had to stretch and bend, point and kick. It was hard work. His feet and legs grew strong. He held his back straight and learned to makes his arms soft and round. Luis soon learned that to become an excellent

ballet dancer requires many years of special training. In addition to knowing all the dance steps and moves, Luis needed to have a knowledge of music, painting and sculpture to become a ballet dancer.

Luis' ballet teacher told him that anyone who wished to be a ballet dancer must be physically strong. In addition to great talent, he must have charm, grace and physical appeal. He must love to dance so much that he will be able to continue his career in spite of anything that may get in his way. Luis' teacher also told him that a ballet dancer never really finishes his training. He must continue to take lessons and practice all the time.

Sometimes. Luis worked at home. Sometimes he worked in school. Work, work, work; it was very hard work, but Luis loved it. Since Luis was attending one of the better ballet schools, he was allowed to put one toe shoes after only two years of study.

Luis' first ballet outfit was a light as a feather and as soft as a cloud. Then, at last, Luis danced in the school play. He was not a goose nor an elephant. He was a happy ballet dancer, dancing a story for all who saw him.

**" I Want to Be a Ballet Dancer" - Comprehension Questions**

1. Ballet is a form of _____.
   a. entertainment b. energy c. running d. floating

2. Indians danced to tell the story of a _____.
   a. big feast b. big hunt c. country d. choreographer

3. Luis finally danced in _____.
   a. the French ballet b. the street c. another country d. the school play

4. Luis was allowed to put on toe shoes when he was _____years old.
   a. two b. nine c. seven d. five

5. True or False: Luis enjoyed being a ballet dancer._____

6. The main idea of this story is_____.
   a. every country has its own dances.
   b. becoming a ballet dancer takes hard work.
   c. ballet dancers must be physically strong.
   d. Luis' teacher gives ballet lessons.

7. Who do you thing came to see Luis when he performed on stage?
   a. a choreographer b. Indians c. Dad d. some Italians

8. Do you think this story could be true? _____
   a. Yes, because ballet dancing takes alot of practice.
   b. Yes, because musicians are also good dancers.
   c. No, because children do not dance.
   d. No, because ballet is not a form of entertainment.

9. This story was written as a _____.
   a. mystery b. true-to-life story c. fairy tale d. science fiction story

10. The author probably wrote this story to _____.
    a. discourage children from ballet dancing.
    b .make fun of ballet dancing
    c. encourage people to visit other countries
    d. describe the work involved in getting something you want.

Excerpted and adapted from C. Paul Jackson, "Little Leaguer's First Uniform," in Traveling Trade Winds, New York: Harper and Row, 1982, 26-29.

## Little Leaguer's First Uniform

On the day of the last big game the Tigers kept telling themselves that it was only another ball game. But each team member knew better!

"No use trying to fool oneself," Laquisha said to Tiffany. "This isn't just another game. It's the championship game!

Tiffany felt strange and empty inside.

"We sure have bad luck," Dominique said loudly. " First Jennifer gets sick. Then Annie is hurt.

"Coach said that real champions overcome bad luck," Tiffany said quietly.

"That's right," Dominique scowled. "But I'd feel better if Annie were in the line-up."

"Aw-w-w-w, Tanisha will do all right, Shanika said. "She fielded the one chance she had Monday all right."

During infield practice Laquisha tossed a roller to Tiffany. She fielded it and threw carefully. Her throw was straight and went right into Laquisha's glove. Tiffany felt a little better.

"That's the way to throw the old ball!" Laquisha cried. "You have the stuff, Tiffany."

Practice time ended. "Play ball!" the umpire cried.

Tiffany's turn at bat did not come until the third inning. "Cook, Number 19, now at bat," a voice announced. Then there came a chuckle over the loudspeaker. Tiffany looked so different from the other batters. Jennifer's uniform hung loose and baggy on her.

Tiffany pulled back deeper into her oversized uniform, but she felt empty and shaky again.

The first pitch was a foot above Tiffany's head and she swung wildly at the ball and missed. Her swing was so hard that she fell in the dust and landed on the seat of her pants.

More howls of laughter! Tears filled Tiffany's eyes. She was miserable. She washed she could dig a hole into the ground and sink into it. Tiffany struck out. She didn't even touch the ball with her bat.

The game was almost half over and neither team had scored. Then Florida scored a run in their half of the fourth inning.

At the beginning of the next inning, the first ball was hit toward Tiffany. She fielded it, threw it to Laquisha, but then heard a sound behind her. Dominique had run over to back her up. Tiffany knew that Dominique had expected her to miss the ball.

Something began to stir inside Tiffany. What if a girl was little? It did not take a giant to play baseball and she would show them. The next time at bat she would knock the ball over the fence. She would show them the size of a person's uniform did not count.

In the bottom of the fifth inning, the score was still 1 - 0 against the Tigers.

Then Ivy got on base and Tiffany came to the plate full of determination. Tiffany shut her ears to the laughter that came from the stands and swung with all her might at the first pitch. Her hit was far from a home run, but it was a safe hit. The Tigers now had runners on first and second base.

Dominique came to bat. She hit the first pitch hard and squarely. It was a long hit. Ivy and Tiffany crossed the plate and Dominique reached third base.

The Tigers were ahead! The score was 2 - 1.

Jane struck out the first two Florida girls to face her. Then Jane got into trouble. The next three Florida batters reached base. A safe hit would score two of them, perhaps all three.

The next Florida girl swung hard on the first pitch. It looked as if the safe hit has come. The girls on the bases ran like the wind. If the ball dropped safely they would score.

Tiffany took one look at the ball. Her short legs pumped over the ground. She could never reach it. But she had to!

Suddenly it seemed as though the oversized pants had tripped Tiffany. But it was not a fall. Tiffany saw that she was not going to reach the ball. She gave a wild leap and slid on the grass. The ball fell right into the pocket of the glove and Tiffany held it tightly.

The unpire waved her arms and shouted, "Fairly caught! Batter's out! The game is over!"

The scoreboard showed a beautiful big 2 for the Tigers and 1 for Florida. The Tigers were Little League World Champions!

Tiffany was surrounded by her teammates. They yelled and laughed. They pounded her on her back. They cheered. Then Tiffany was lifted high on her teammates' shoulders. Tiffany's grin was wide and happy.

**"Little Leaguer's First Uniform" - Comprehension Questions**

1. Why was this not just another ball game for the Tigers?_____
   a. because this game was against the Lions
   b. because this was the championship game
   c. because this game was going to be on television
   d. because Tiffany, the star player, was in the game

2. Why was Tiffany on the team that day?_____
   a. because she was one of the best players
   b. because the coach chose her to play
   c. because she insisted on being allowed to play
   d. because two regular team members could not play

3. What was Tiffany's main problem in this story?_____
   a. she was too fat b. she was too short c. she was filled with tears
   d. she could not hit

4. Who caught the last fly ball of the game?_____
   a. Dominique b. Jennifer c. Tiffany d. Laquisha

5. Who won the championship game?_____
   a. neither team; it was a tie score b. neither team; it was rained out
   c. the Tigers d. the Florida team

6. True or False? By the end of the game, Tiffany's teammates were proud of her._____

7. The main idea of this story is_____.
   a. Tiffany catches the last fly ball of the game.
   b. Tiffany makes a safe hit.
   c. A person's size is the only thing that matters.
   d. A person's size doesn't matter as long as you try your best.

8. Do you agree with the way Tiffany behaved during the game?
   a. No, I do not think small children should play baseball.
   b. Yes, I think Tiffany did her best and that is very important.
   c. Yes, I think Tiffany acted just like the great pitcher she was.
   d. No, Tiffany acted like a fool.

9. Do you think this story could have really happened?_____
   a. Yes, because Little League players are sometimes small.
   b. Yes, because tigers makes good baseball players.
   c. No, because Tiffany's teammates are all giants.
   d. No, because bad baseball players never play baseball.

10. The author probably wrote this story to_____
   a. encourage children to play baseball.
   b. make fun of little children.
   c. state that only giants play baseball.
   d. show that size isn't everything.

Excerpted and adapted from Greta Walker, "Modeling Careers", New York: Franklin Watts, 1986.

His name is Cesar Rivera, but his model's calling card says simply, "Cesar". He is 6'2" tall, wears size 40 regular jacket, has black hair and green eyes. He is one of the top fashion models.

"I always wanted to be a model," remembers Cesar. " I lived in a small town in Massachusetts and I felt no one understood me. My escape was through books and fashion. Luckily, my father supported my dreams."

Cesar's friends in his neighborhood laughed when he said he wanted to be a model. He was tall and thin and far from the best looking boy in the neighborhood. He had a lively personality.

When he finished high school, Cesar's parents insisted he take a job before going off to New York, so he worked in an office. One Friday, he took the day off and went to New York to see what was available in modeling.

He picked up the *New York Times* and saw an advertisement for a job as a coat model. When he got there, he knew that he did not have much experience. He didn't even know how to walk properly. So he got nowhere fast. On the way down in the elevator, Cesar heard some other models talking about an Italian designer, called Oscar, who was looking for models.

Oscar liked Cesar's youth, freshness and lively personality. Cesar's parents moved him to New York the following week. The following nine months Cesar worked at Bloomingdales, one of New York's better department stores. Next, he worked at Lord and Taylor, another good store.

Cesar then tried to get a job at a modeling agency. But there were four other models before him so his chances were not good.

Then he decided to go to Paris. Cesar had heard it was easier to work there. He would give it a try. Even though he didn't know the language and he didn't know anyone in Paris, he was not afraid.

In Paris, Cesar had several modeling jobs. He said it was like going to school. " I learned all about clothes by having them fitted on me. Because of my Paris training I can put on anything and know instantly if it is right or wrong," Cesar remembers.

At the end of four years, a highly paid Cesar, started to work on his own. He was listed as one of the top ten models. Recently, Cesar began to take acting lessons. His goal is to do television commercials and to have a career as an actor.

Cesar's advice to new models is as follows:

1. You have to really want to be a model.

2. If you want to do something, just go and do it.

3.Don't give up. No matter how hard it gets, it's worth it!

**"Modeling Careers" - Comprehension Questions**

1. Cesar's friends _____when he said he wanted to be a model.
   a. cried b. laughed c. sighed d. screamed

2. On the elevator, Cesar heard some models talking about _____.
   a. an Italian designer b. a good store in New York c. a coat model
   d. taking acting lessons.

3. Cesar's goal is to have a career as a (an) _____.
   a. model b. agent c. actor d. designer

4. How did Cesar feel about going to Paris?_____
   a. afraid b. angry c. unhappy d. determined

5. True or False: According to Cesar's experiences, becoming a model is a very easy thing to do._____

6. The main idea of this story is_____.
   a. living in a small town in Massachusetts.
   b. the life of an Italian designer.
   c. Cesar's modeling career.
   d. training in Paris.

7. Cesar's training in Paris helped him to _____.
   a. understand more about clothing.
   b. be a better office worker.
   c. learn a new language.
   d. become a designer.

8. Models are used_____.
   a. for picking up the *New York Times.*
   b. to work in offices.
   c. for training people in Paris.
   d. to show off clothing.

9. This story was written as a _____.
   a. fairy tale
   b. biography
   c. mystery story
   d. science fiction story

10. The author probably wrote this story to _____.
   a. discourage people from becoming models.
   b. describe life in New York City.
   c. encourage people to become office workers.
   d. describe the actions of a model.

Excerpted and adapted from "Prepare for Crash Landing", *Reader's Digest Skill Builder*, Grade 4, Part 3, 24.

It was 8:37 p.m. when Captain Jazmine Talley pushed the big airplane down the runway. The take-off was smooth. There was still plenty of daylight. Jazmine had no idea anything was wrong. Soon, she thought, she would be flying in the thin air 30,000 feet high.

The copilot brought up the handle which raises the landing gear. Then suddenly she pointed at two red warning lights gleaming at her like evil eyes. One light told that a gear had failed to rise. The other showed showed that the door which folds over the gear was still wide open. What was wrong?

The answer came through the earphones from the control tower. Two wheels has rolled off past the edge of the runway.

Jazmine acted quickly. There could be no thought now of flying to London. This airport was home base, the field she knew best. Here she could count on the advice and help of people she knew well.

She began flying in a long, slow circle over the airport. She kept the flaps down so she could handle the plane more easily at a slow speed. Jazmine was not yet ready to tell her passengers about the trouble. First, she had to work out a plan for landing.

Meanwhile, Cynthia, the flight engineer, was making a study of the landing gear. By looking through a window in the floor she saw that the left gear was broken and two of its wheels were missing.

At once the airport gave a "34 Alert", meaning "great emergency." An 11,000 foot runway was closed down to receive the damaged jet. Four fire engines and seven ambulances rushed to the runway. Sixty police-firemen hurried to the airport.

The danger of fire was great because a part of the landing gear was sticking out beneath the plane. This jagged piece of steel would scrape the runway. It would cause sparks to fly all around the gas tanks.

Jazmine knew that she was going to have to land this plane on its nose wheel and right landing gear, and hold it on them. It would be like walking a tightrope on one leg.

She asked the airport tower to lay a thick coat of foamite over the last 3,000 feet of the runway. A thick coating of this substance would lessen the danger of fire. The foamite job, she was told would take about three hours. There would be enough time.

It was 9 p.m. The plane had been in the air for 23 minutes. Now it was time to tell the passengers. Captain Kathy Johnson, another pilot, offered to talk with the passengers while Jazmine kept in touch with the airport. Kathy assigned

each crew member to a place down the long aisle so they could answer passengers' questions immediately.

As quickly as the crew reached their places, Kathy's voice came over the public address system. " May I have your attention, please?" After introducing herself, she quietly told them of the trouble. She explained what was being done in the plane and on the ground to make the landing as safe as possible. "I have great faith in Captain Jazmine Talley," she said. "I understand the flight attendants have a roast beef dinner ready for us," Kathy added. "so let's not disappoint them."

It was nearly midnight. The foaming of the runway was finished and the plane's gas was getting low. The time for landing was near at hand.

At 12:02 the airport tower closed the field. It held back all outgoing flights ansd began sending incoming flights to other airports.

Captain Kathy Johnson told the passengers to take off their glasses and to tightly fasten their seat belts. Everyone was tense. There was no talking. Each passenger seemed alone with her thoughts, waiting and praying.

At 12:20 Jazmine told the tower she was short of fuel. "We'll have your clearance shortly," the tower answered. At 12:21 the airplance was dangerously low on fuel. Jazmine knew she could not keep control of the plane without engine power. "We are about to land," she told the tower.

Jazmine told her passengers it was time to go down. "Please make certain your seat belts are well fastened," she urged.

"You are cleared to land," the tower called.

Jazmine fought with every nerve and muscle to hold the airplane dead center along the runway and to keep the left wing high. The touchdown had been perfect. But it was going to be bad when she began losing speed and that landing gear hit the ground.

The plane began lunging toward the left side of the runway. The pilot eased up on the reverse thrust on both left engines. She kept it full on both right engines and hit her right brake.

The airplane was starting to stop. Jazmine went to her right brake and the runway below ran by more slowly. Would the landing never end?

The huge jet leaned heavily to the left now, pulling toward the left edge of the runway. It was harder to bring it back because of the loss of speed. But at last it came, scraping on and on, slower and still slower. Then, suddenly, the great plane stopped.

After a moment of almost deafening silence, there was a burst of applause from the passengers' cabin. Jazmine Talley slumped over her wheel and sighed deeply.

**"Prepare for Crash Landing" - Comprehension Questions**

1. The copilot brought up the handle which raised the _____.
   a. take-off gear b. landing gear c. lights d. earphones

2. A thick coat of foamite would_____.
   a. cause the airplane to burn
   b. taste very good
   3. lessen the danger of fire
   4. put out a fire

3. At 12:21 the airplane was _____low on fuel.
   a. dangerously b. quickly c. instantly d. slightly

4. During the entire experience, Captain Jazmine Talley felt_____.
   a. happy and carefree
   b. tense and uneasy
   c. courageous and confident
   d. shy and embarrassed

5. The passengers blamed Captain Jazmine Talley for the incident on the airplane. True or False? _____

6. The main idea of the story is_____.
   a. my first plane ride
   b. circling over an airport
   c. a tense and frightening airplane experience
   d. an airplane trip to London

7. How did Captain Kathy Jonson keep the passengers calm?_____.
   a. She gave them coffee and donuts.
   b. She explained to the passengers exactly what the danger was aboard the airplane.
   c. She answered the passengers' questions.
   d. She took over and flew the plane.

8. The author wrote this story to_____.
   a. encourage people to become airplane pilots
   b. encourage people to visit London
   c. describe an incident on a means of transportation
   d. tell people not to fly in airplanes

9. The author of this story probably_____.
   a. was on the airplane at the time of the incident
   b. was using a great deal of fantasy
   c. was happy about the service on airplanes
   d. was trying to get Captain Jazmine Talley fired

10. Do you think this story could have really happened?_____
   a. Yes, airplane crashed happen every day.
   b. Yes, a dangerous airplane incident is possible.
   c. No, airplanes never have problems.
   d. No, airplanes do not fly to London.

Excerpted and adapted from "Guides to High Adventure", Reader's Digest Skill Builder, Grade 4, Part 3, 5.

Two mountain climbers were on the upper slope of a peak in the French Alps. They were roped together, sixty feet apart. The guide, Madeline, was leading her employer.

They had reached a point where a risk had to be taken. The slope, a wall of rock, was gashed down the middle by a dep crack fifty feet wide. Falling stones sometimes came rushing down it. But the climbers must cross this crack if they were to continue their climb.

Madeline moved rapidly from foothold to foothold down the steep side of the crack. When she came to the end of the rope, she hitched it over a splinter of rock so it would hold her employer. Both women kept glancing uneasily upward.

Suddenly from high above came a noise like a gunshot. Then there followed a low mutter which quickly grew to a roar like that of an express train.

Madeline's employer couldn't move quickly enough to get out of the way. Her footholds were too narrow. She looked down into empty space. Flattened against the rock, she folded her arms above her head and waited, hoping for the best.

The young guide leaped back up the side of the crack at racing speed. Before the first stones arrived, Madeline was above her employer, bent over, protecting her with her body.

They were lucky. Most of the stone fall missed them. Soon both were across the crack and on their way to the top of the mountain.

In risking her own life, Madeline had simply obeyed the Alpine law that is more than a hundred years old: No guide should come back from the mountain without her employer.

In spite of the danger, any adventurous girl who lives near the Alps dreams of becomming a guide. As a child, Madeline had watched famous guides walking proudly down the streets of her village. She knew the climbing record of every one of them. And she had listened eagerly to their talk of long glides down snow slopes.

When Madeline was eighteen, she signed up as a mountain porter. As a porteer, she was an apprentice guide who helped the regular guide when another woman was needed on the rope.

After two years as a porter, Madeline was ready for the test to become a guide. This difficult test lasted three weeks. It was given by the "guide chief" appointed by the government.

Many of the test questions stressed the safety rules a guide must follow. Part of of the test was taken right on the mountains. Madeline had to show that she could do all of the work from getting a man out of a crevice to giving first aid.

At the end of three weeks, Madeline was taken on a long climb by the "guide chief". Madeline led on the rope, while the chief watched every move she made. The climb called for every kind of climbing technique.

After the test, the chief agreed that Madeline could be trusted with the lives of others. Soom Madeline was leading visiting mountain climbers up the steep slopes herself. Her dream had come true.

**"Guides to High Adventure" - Comprehension Questions**

1. Madeline had simply _____ the Alpine law.
   a. ignored b. obeyed c. written d. heard

2. When Madeline was 18, she signed up as a _____.
   a. news reporter b. employer c. mountain porter d. doctor

3. The Alps are_____.
   a. mud b. mountains c. grass d. snow drifts

4. Madeline wanted to be a guide because_____.
   a. she could climb with the "guide chief"
   b. she was adventurous and admired the expert guides
   c. she skiied in the Olympics
   d. of her difficulty in mountain climbing

5. True or False? Safety rules are stressed in the tests because guides are responsible for their employer's lives. _____

6. Being a guide is _____.
   a. easy b. exciting c. boring d. worthless

7. The main idea of this story is_____.
   a. the adventures of a mountain climbing guide
   b. a narrow escape
   c. two mountain climbers on the Alps
   d. taking a long climb with the "guide chief"

8. The author wrote this story to _____.
   a. describe the French Alps
   b. stress safety rules
   c. encourage mountain climbing
   d. describe the importance of helping others

9. Why do you think the Alpine people have the "law" that no guide should come back from the mountains without his employer?_____
   a. because the guide would not get paid
   b. because guides are excellent climbers
   c. because employers have faith in their guides to take care of them on the mountain
   d. because the mountains are not good places to live

10. The author intended for the title "High Adventure" to have two meanings, _____.
   a. expensive and tall
   b. expensive and drunk
   c. height and exciting
   d. drunk and happy

Excerpted and adapted from Elting, Mary ( 1971), The First Book of Nurses. New York: Franklin Watts, 12-15.

Ever since he was a little boy, Steven Brown has wanted to be a nurse. His teachers think he will be a good one, too. He is cheerful and healthy, and he is very patient. He doesn't get nervous when unexpected things happen. Best of all, he likes people.

Now that Steven is eighteen years old and has graduated from high school, he can go to nursing school. One friend, John, whom he meets in nursing school says, "Just wait till you meet Mr. Chase!"

"Who's Mr. Chase?" Steven asks.

"Don't you know? He's your first patient. You never saw such a man! He won't do a thing for himself. Just you wait!" And that's all John would tell Steven.

Steven is a little worried. What kind of person can Mr. Chase be? Suppose Steven can't take care of him properly?

But when Steven sees Mr. Chase he has to laugh. Mr. Chase is a man size doll made especially for beginning nurses to practice on.

When regular classes begin, Steven and the other boys pretend that Mr. Chase is very sick. They learn how to make his bed while he is still in it. They learn how to gently turn him over. They find out the best way to give him a bath in bed.

In the old days, Mr. Chase was always a stiff, hard dummy. Today Chase dolls are more like real people. They even have ears that are shaped just like yours, inside and out, so that students can learn to use an ear washing syringe properly.

After a while, Steven and John and all the other beginning nurses practice on each other. Steven gives John a shampoo in bed. John gives Steven nose drops. They learn to put bandages on their friends. They learn how to take temperatures and pulses. And they all practice giving injections of pure water to each other.

When you feel sick you want your face washed carefully, so nurses must practice that too. Mr. Chase, the large doll, can't say," Hey, stop flipping that soapy cloth in my eye!" However, a friend can and will. By practicing on John, Steven learns to bunch a wet washcloth in his hand.

After Steven has been a student has been a student nurse for about six weeks, he has his first chance to help with real nursing work. He helps patients wash and he rubs their backs when they feel tired. In the beginning, a nurse-teacher always stands by Steven, but, as soon as he has passed a test in each job, he is ready to go on alone.

**The First Book of Nurses - Comprehension Questions**

1. Steven would make a good nurse because_____.
   a. he is mean and nasty
   b. he is careful, but selfish
   c. he is very nervous
   d. he is cheerful and healthy

2. Steven's first patient is _____.
   a. John
   b .Mr. Chase
   c. Mr. Manhattan
   d. a real person

3. Steven can go on and work alone when _____.
   a. he gives big pills to John
   b. he has passed a test in each job
   c. he puts soap into a patient's eyes
   d. he finally gets sick

4. Chase dolls are used_____.
   a. instead of real people
   b. to give injections
   c. for the nurse to play with
   d. to take enormous pills

5. True or False? Nursing students practice on each other because they are always getting sick._____

6. The main idea of this story is_____.
   a. Steven unpacks his suitcase.
   b. Steven goes to nursing school
   c. Mr. Chase is a large doll
   d. Steven and John give each other injections

7. Becoming a nurse is _____.
   a. boring b. easy c. worthless d. difficult

8. Why do you think Steven wanted to become a nurse?_____
   a. because he wanted to help people
   b. because he like Mr. Chase
   c. because he liked to play with dolls
   d. because he was afraid of injections

9. This story is a _____.
   a. fairy tale
   b. mystery story
   c. true - to - life story
   d. science fiction story

10. The author wrote this story to_____.
    a. discourage people from becoming nurses
    b. describe what happens in a hospital
    c. encourage people to become doctors
    d. describe the many things nurses learn to do in school

## Appendix A - Reading Selections and Questions

Excerpted and adapted from Carla Greene's "I Want to Be a Ballet Dancer".

"Kick high, kick low and away I go," said Marie. I am a goose. I can be anything when I dance. Now I am an elephant running to a river."

"Everyone can understand a story told by a dance, and a story told by music or pictures," said Mom "The dance is a very old way to tell a story. Indians danced to tell the story of a big hunt. Almost every country has its own dances. Italy, France, England and America have the most famous ballet dancers."

Ballet is a form of entertainment which consists of a series of dances. These dances are performed to music. They tell a story or express a mood or idea, usually without words. The man who invents and arranges the dancing is called the choreographer. The ballet usually makes use of beautiful costumes, scenery and lighting effects. Ballet is a dance which belongs to no one land. For hundreds of years, the steps in ballet have been about the same in all countries.

One day Marie and her mom went to see a ballet. "Oh, how beautiful!" said Marie. "I want to be a ballet dancer, and float along on my toes."

So, when Marie was seven years old, she went to ballet school. But she did not float on her toes. First, she had to stretch and bend, point and kick. It was hard work.Her feet and legs grew strong. She held her back straight and learned to makes her arms soft and round. Marie soon learned that to become an excellent

ballet dancer requires many years of special training. In addition to knowing all the dance steps and moves,Marie needed to have a knowledge of music, painting and sculpture to become a ballet dancer.

Marie's ballet teacher told her that anyone who wished to be a ballet dancer must be physically strong. In addition to great talent, she must have charm, grace and physical appeal She must love to dance so much that she will be able to continue her career in spite of anything that may get in her way. Marie's teacher also told her that a ballet dancer never really finishes her training.She must continue to take lessons and practice all the time.

Sometimes. Marie worked at home. Sometimes she worked in school. Work, work, work; it was very hard work, but Marie loved it. Since Marie was attending one of the better ballet schools, she was allowed to put one toe shoes after only two years of study.

Marie's first ballet outfit was a light as a feather and as soft as a cloud. Then, at last, Marie danced in the school play. She was not a goose nor an elephant.She was a happy ballet dancer, dancing a story for all who saw her.

**" I Want to Be a Ballet Dancer" - Comprehension Questions**

1. Ballet is a form of _____.
   a. entertainment b. energy c. running d. floating

2. Indians danced to tell the story of a _____.
   a. big feast b. big hunt c. country d. choreographer

3. Marie finally danced in _____.
   a. the French ballet b. the street c. another country d. the school play

4. Marie was allowed to put on toe shoes when she was _____years old.
   a. two b. nine c. seven d. five

5. True or False: Marie enjoyed being a ballet dancer._____

6. The main idea of this story is_____.
   a. every country has its own dances.
   b. becoming a ballet dancer takes hard work.
   c. ballet dancers must be physically strong.
   d. Marie's teacher gives ballet lessons.

7. Who do you thing came to see Marie when she performed on stage?
   a. a choreographer b. Indians c. Mom d. some Italians

8. Do you think this story could be true? _____
   a. Yes, because ballet dancing takes alot of practice.
   b. Yes, because musicians are also good dancers.
   c. No, because children do not dance.
   d. No, because ballet is not a form of entertainment.

9. This story was written as a _____.
   a. mystery b. true-to-life story c. fairy tale d. science fiction story

10. The author probably wrote this story to _____.
    a. discourage children from ballet dancing.
    b .make fun of ballet dancing
    c. encourage people to visit other countries
    d. describe the work involved in getting something you want.

Excerpted and adapted from C. Paul Jackson, "Little Leaguer's First Uniform," in Traveling Trade Winds, New York: Harper and Row, 1982, 26-29.

## Little Leaguer's First Uniform

On the day of the last big game the Tigers kept telling themselves that it was only another ball game. But each team member knew better!

"No use trying to fool oneself," Jerome said to Charles. "This isn't just another game. It's the championship game!

Charles felt strange and empty inside.

"We sure have bad luck,"Alexandro said loudly. " First Ruben gets sick. Then Jonathan is hurt.

"Coach said that real champions overcome bad luck," Charles said quietly.

"That's right,"Alexandro scowled. "But I'd feel better if Jonathan were in the line-up."

"Aw-w-w-w, Herme will do all right, Sal said. "He fielded the one chance he had Monday all right."

During infield practice Jerome tossed a roller to Charles. He fielded it and threw carefully. His throw was straight and went right into Jerome's glove. Charles felt a little better.

"That's the way to throw the old ball!" Jerome cried. "You have the stuff, Charles."

Practice time ended. "Play ball!" the umpire cried.

Charles' turn at bat did not come until the third inning. "Cook, Number 19, now at bat," a voice announced. Then there came a chuckle over the loudspeaker. Charles looked so different from the other batters. Ruben's uniform hung loose and baggy on him. Charles pulled back deeper into his oversized uniform, but he felt empty and shaky again.

The first pitch was a foot above Charles' head and he swung wildly at the ball and missed. His swing was so hard that he fell in the dust and landed on the seat of his pants.

More howls of laughter! Tears filled Charles' eyes. He was miserable. He wished he could dig a hole into the ground and sink into it Charles. struck out. He didn't even touch the ball with his bat.

The game was almost half over and neither team had scored. Then Florida scored a run in their half of the fourth inning.

At the beginning of the next inning, the first ball was hit toward Charles. He fielded it, threw it toJerome, but then heard a sound behind him. Alexandro had run over to back him up. Charles knew that Alexandro had expected him to miss the ball.

Something began to stir inside Charles. What if a boy was little? It did not take a giant to play baseball and he would show them. The next time at bat he

would knock the ball over the fence.He would show them the size of a person's uniform did not count.

In the bottom of the fifth inning, the score was still 1 - 0 against the Tigers.

Then Matthew got on base and Charles came to the plate full of determination. Charles shut his ears to the laughter that came from the stands and swung with all his might at the first pitch. His hit was far from a home run, but it was a safe hit. The Tigers now had runners on first and second base.

Alexandro came to bat.He hit the first pitch hard and squarely. It was a long hit. Matthew and Charles crossed the plate and Alexandro reached third base.

The Tigers were ahead! The score was 2 - 1.

Scott struck out the first two Florida girls to face her. Then Scott got into trouble. The next three Florida batters reached base. A safe hit would score two of them, perhaps all three.

The next Florida batter swung hard on the first pitch. It looked as if the safe hit has come. The boys on the bases ran like the wind. If the ball dropped safely they would score.

Charles took one look at the ball. His short legs pumped over the ground. He could never reach it. But he had to!

Suddenly it seemed as though the oversized pants had tripped Charles. But it was not a fall. Charles saw that he was not going to reach the ball. He gave a wild leap and slid on the grass. The ball fell right into the pocket of the glove and Charles held it tightly.

The unpire waved his arms and shouted, "Fairly caught! Batter's out! The game is over!"

The scoreboard showed a beautiful big 2 for the Tigers and 1 for Florida. The Tigers were Little League World Champions!

Charles was surrounded by his teammates. They yelled and laughed. They pounded him on his back. They cheered. Then Charles was lifted high on his teammates' shoulders. Charles' grin was wide and happy.

**"Little Leaguer's First Uniform" - Comprehension Questions**

1. Why was this not just another ball game for the Tigers?_____
   a. because this game was against the Lions
   b. because this was the championship game
   c. because this game was going to be on television
   d. because Charles, the star player, was in the game

2. Why was Charles on the team that day?_____
   a. because he was one of the best players
   b. because the coach chose him to play
   c. because he insisted on being allowed to play
   d. because two regular team members could not play

3. What was Charles's main problem in this story?_____
   a. he was too fat b.he was too short c. he was filled with tears
   d. he could not hit

4. Who caught the last fly ball of the game?_____
   a. Alexandro b. Ruben c. Charles d.Jerome

5. Who won the championship game?_____
   a. neither team; it was a tie score b. neither team; it was rained out
   c. the Tigers d. the Florida team

6. True or False? By the end of the game, Charles's teammates were proud of him. _____

7. The main idea of this story is_____.
   a. Charles catches the last fly ball of the game.
   b. Charles makes a safe hit.
   c. A person's size is the only thing that matters.
   d. A person's size doesn't matter as long as you try your best.

8. Do you agree with the way Charles behaved during the game?_____
   a. No, I do not think small children should play baseball.
   b. Yes, I think Charles did his best and that is very important.
   c. Yes, I think Charles acted just like the great pitcher he was.
   d. No, Charles acted like a fool.

9. Do you think this story could have really happened?_____
   a. Yes, because Little League players are sometimes small.
   b. Yes, because tigers makes good baseball players.
   c. No, because Charles's teammates are all giants.
   d. No, because bad baseball players never play baseball.

10. The author probably wrote this story to_____
   a. encourage children to play baseball.
   b. make fun of little children.
   c. state that only giants play baseball.
   d. show that size isn't everything.

Excerpted and adapted from Greta Walker, "Modeling Careers", New York: Franklin Watts, 1986.

Her name is Ciara Woods, but her model's calling card says simply, "Ciara".She is 5'8" tall, wears a size six dress, has black hair and green eyes.She is one of the top fashion models.

"I always wanted to be a model," remembers Ciara. " I lived in a small town in Massachusetts and I felt no one understood me. My escape was through books and fashion. Luckily, my mother supported my dreams."

Ciara's friends in her neighborhood laughed when she said she wanted to be a model.She was tall and thin and far from the best looking girl in the neighborhood. She had a lively personality.

When she finished high school, Ciars's parents insisted she take a job before going off to New York, so she worked in an office. One Friday, she took the day off and went to New York to see what was available in modeling.

She picked up the *New York Times* and saw an advertisement for a job as a coat model. When she got there, she knew that she did not have much experience. She didn't even know how to walk properly. So she got nowhere fast. On the way down in the elevator, Ciara heard some other models talking about an Italian designer, called Loren, who was looking for models.

Loren liked Ciara's youth, freshness and lively personality. Ciara's parents moved her to New York the following week. The following nine months Ciara worked at Bloomingdales, one of New York's better department stores. Next, she worked at Lord and Taylor, another good store.

Ciara then tried to get a job at a modeling agency. But there were four other models before him so her chances were not good.

Then she decided to go to Paris. Ciara had heard it was easier to work there.She would give it a try. Even though she didn't know the language and she didn't know anyone in Paris, she was not afraid.

In Paris, Ciara had several modeling jobs.She said it was like going to school. " I learned all about clothes by having them fitted on me. Because of my Paris training I can put on anything and know instantly if it is right or wrong," Ciara remembers.

At the end of four years, a highly paid Ciara, started to work on her own. She was listed as one of the top ten models. Recently, Ciara began to take acting lessons. Her goal is to do television commercials and to have a career as an actress. Ciara's advice to new models is as follows:

1. You have to really want to be a model.

2. If you want to do something, just go and do it.

3. Don't give up. No matter how hard it gets, it's worth it!

**"Modeling Careers" - Comprehension Questions**

1. Ciara's friends _____when she said she wanted to be a model.
   a. cried b. laughed c. sighed d. screamed

2. On the elevator, Ciara heard some models talking about _____.
   a. an Italian designer b. a good store in New York c. a coat model
   d. taking acting lessons.

3. Ciara's goal is to have a career as a (an) _____.
   a. model b. agent c. actress d. designer

4. How did Ciara feel about going to Paris?_____
   a. afraid b. angry c. unhappy d. determined

5. True or False: According to Ciara's experiences, becoming a model is a very easy thing to do._____

6. The main idea of this story is_____.
   a. living in a small town in Massachusetts.
   b. the life of an Italian designer.
   c. Ciara's modeling career.
   d. training in Paris.

7. Ciara's training in Paris helped him to _____.
   a. understand more about clothing.
   b. be a better office worker.
   c. learn a new language.
   d. become a designer.

8. Models are used_____.
   a. for picking up the *New York Times.*
   b. to work in offices.
   c. for training people in Paris.
   d. to show off clothing.

9. This story was written as a _____.
   a. fairy tale
   b. biography
   c. mystery story
   d. science fiction story

10. The author probably wrote this story to _____.
   a. discourage people from becoming models.
   b. describe life in New York City.
   c. encourage people to become office workers.
   d. describe the actions of a model.

Excerpted and adapted from "Prepare for Crash Landing", *Reader's Digest Skill Builder*, Grade 4, Part 3, 24.

It was 8:37 p.m. when Captain Tyrone Talley pushed the big airplane down the runway. The take-off was smooth. There was still plenty of daylight. Tyrone had no idea anything was wrong. Soon, he thought, he would be flying in the thin air 30,000 feet high.

The copilot brought up the handle which raises the landing gear. Then suddenly he pointed at two red warning lights gleaming at him like evil eyes. One light told that a gear had failed to rise. The other showed showed that the door which folds over the gear was still wide open. What was wrong?

The answer came through the earphones from the control tower. Two wheels has rolled off past the edge of the runway.

Tyrone acted quickly. There could be no thought now of flying to London. This airport was home base, the field he knew best. Here he could count on the advice and help of people he knew well.

He began flying in a long, slow circle over the airport.He kept the flaps down so he could handle the plane more easily at a slow speed. Tyrone was not yet ready to tell his passengers about the trouble. First, he had to work out a plan for landing.

Meanwhile, Dennis, the flight engineer, was making a study of the landing gear. By looking through a window in the floor he saw that the left gear was broken and two of its wheels were missing.

At once the airport gave a "34 Alert", meaning "great emergency." An 11,000 foot runway was closed down to receive the damaged jet. Four fire engines and seven ambulances rushed to the runway. Sixty police-firemen hurried to the airport.

The danger of fire was great because a part of the landing gear was sticking out beneath the plane. This jagged piece of steel would scrape the runway. It would cause sparks to fly all around the gas tanks.

Tyrone knew that he was going to have to land this plane on its nose wheel and right landing gear, and hold it on them. It would be like walking a tightrope on one leg.

He asked the airport tower to lay a thick coat of foamite over the last 3,000 feet of the runway. A thick coating of this substance would lessen the danger of fire. The foamite job, he was told would take about three hours. There would be enough time.

It was 9 p.m. The plane had been in the air for 23 minutes. Now it was time to tell the passengers. Captain Eric Johnson, another pilot, offered to talk with the passengers while Tyrone kept in touch with the airport. Eric assigned

each crew member to a place down the long aisle so they could answer passengers' questions immediately.

As quickly as the crew reached their places, Eric's voice came over the public address system. " May I have your attention, please?" After introducing himself, he quietly told them of the trouble. He explained what was being done in the plane and on the ground to make the landing as safe as possible. "I have great faith in Captain Tyrone Talley," he said. "I understand the flight attendants have a roast beef dinner ready for us," Eric added. "so let's not disappoint them."

It was nearly midnight. The foaming of the runway was finished and the plane's gas was getting low. The time for landing was near at hand.

At 12:02 the airport tower closed the field. It held back all outgoing flights ansd began sending incoming flights to other airports.

Captain Eric Johnson told the passengers to take off their glasses and to tightly fasten their seat belts. Everyone was tense. There was no talking. Each passenger seemed alone with her thoughts, waiting and praying.

At 12:20 Tyrone told the tower she was short of fuel. "We'll have your clearance shortly," the tower answered. At 12:21 the airplane was dangerously low on fuel. Tyrone knew he could not keep control of the plane without engine power. "We are about to land," he told the tower.

Tyrone told his passengers it was time to go down. "Please make certain your seat belts are well fastened," he urged.

"You are cleared to land," the tower called.

Tyrone fought with every nerve and muscle to hold the airplane dead center along the runway and to keep the left wing high. The touchdown had been perfect. But it was going to be bad when he began losing speed and that landing gear hit the ground.

The plane began lunging toward the left side of the runway. The pilot eased up on the reverse thrust on both left engines.He kept it full on both right engines and hit his right brake.

The airplane was starting to stop. Tyrone went to his right brake and the runway below ran by more slowly. Would the landing never end?

The huge jet leaned heavily to the left now, pulling toward the left edge of the runway. It was harder to bring it back because of the loss of speed. But at last it came, scraping on and on, slower and still slower. Then, suddenly, the great plane stopped.

After a moment of almost deafening silence, there was a burst of applause from the passengers' cabin. Tyrone Talley slumped over his wheel and sighed deeply.

**"Prepare for Crash Landing" - Comprehension Questions**

1. The copilot brought up the handle which raised the _____.
   a. take-off gear b. landing gear c. lights d. earphones

2. A thick coat of foamite would_____.
   a. cause the airplane to burn
   b. taste very good
   3. lessen the danger of fire
   4. put out a fire

3. At 12:21 the airplane was _____low on fuel.
   a. dangerously b. quickly c. instantly d. slightly

4. During the entire experience, Captain Tyrone Talley felt_____.
   a. happy and carefree
   b. tense and uneasy
   c. courageous and confident
   d. shy and embarrassed

5. The passengers blamed Captain Tyrone Talley for the incident on the airplane. True or False? _____

6. The main idea of the story is_____.
   a. my first plane ride
   b. circling over an airport
   c. a tense and frightening airplane experience
   d. an airplane trip to London

7. How did Captain Eric Jonson keep the passengers calm?_____.
   a. He gave them coffee and donuts.
   b. He explained to the passengers exactly what the danger was aboard the airplane.
   c. He answered the passengers' questions.
   d. He took over and flew the plane.

8. The author wrote this story to_____.
   a. encourage people to become airplane pilots
   b. encourage people to visit London
   c. describe an incident on a means of transportation
   d. tell people not to fly in airplanes

9. The author of this story probably_____.
   a. was on the airplane at the time of the incident
   b. was using a great deal of fantasy
   c. was happy about the service on airplanes
   d. was trying to get Captain Tyrone Talley fired

10. Do you think this story could have really happened?_____
    a. Yes, airplane crashed happen every day.
    b. Yes, a dangerous airplane incident is possible.
    c. No, airplanes never have problems.
    d. No, airplanes do not fly to London.

Excerpted and adapted from "Guides to High Adventure", Reader's Digest Skill Builder, Grade 4, Part 3, 5.

Two mountain climbers were on the upper slope of a peak in the French Alps. They were roped together, sixty feet apart. The guide, Calvin, was leading his employer.

They had reached a point where a risk had to be taken. The slope, a wall of rock, was gashed down the middle by a dep crack fifty feet wide. Falling stones sometimes came rushing down it. But the climbers must cross this crack if they were to continue their climb.

Calvin moved rapidly from foothold to foothold down the steep side of the crack. When he came to the end of the rope, he hitched it over a splinter of rock so it would hold his employer. Both men kept glancing uneasily upward.

Suddenly from high above came a noise like a gunshot. Then there followed a low mutter which quickly grew to a roar like that of an express train.

Calvin's employer couldn't move quickly enough to get out of the way. His footholds were too narrow. He looked down into empty space. Flattened against the rock, he folded his arms above his head and waited, hoping for the best.

The young guide leaped back up the side of the crack at racing speed. Before the first stones arrived, Calvin was above his employer, bent over, protecting him with his body.

They were lucky. Most of the stone fall missed them. Soon both were across the crack and on their way to the top of the mountain.

In risking his own life, Calvin had simply obeyed the Alpine law that is more than a hundred years old: No guide should come back from the mountain without his employer.

In spite of the danger, any adventurous boy who lives near the Alps dreams of becoming a guide. As a child, Calvin had watched famous guides walking proudly down the streets of his village. He knew the climbing record of every one of them. And he had listened eagerly to their talk of long glides down snow slopes.

When Calvin was eighteen, he signed up as a mountain porter. As a porter, he was an apprentice guide who helped the regular guide when another man was needed on the rope.

After two years as a porter, Calvin was ready for the test to become a guide. This difficult test lasted three weeks. It was given by the "guide chief" appointed by the government.

Many of the test questions stressed the safety rules a guide must follow. Part of of the test was taken right on the mountains. Calvin had to show that he could do all of the work from getting a man out of a crevice to giving first aid.

At the end of three weeks, Calvin was taken on a long climb by the "guide chief". Calvin led on the rope, while the chief watched every move he made. The climb called for every kind of climbing technique.

After the test, the chief agreed that Calvin could be trusted with the lives of others. Soon Calvin was leading visiting mountain climbers up the steep slopes herself. His dream had come true.

**"Guides to High Adventure" - Comprehension Questions**

1. Calvin had simply _____ the Alpine law.
   a. ignored b. obeyed c. written d. heard

2. When Calvin was 18, he signed up as a _____.
   a. news reporter b. employer c. mountain porter d. doctor

3. The Alps are_____.
   a. mud b. mountains c. grass d. snow drifts

4. Calvin wanted to be a guide because_____.
   a. he could climb with the "guide chief"
   b .he was adventurous and admired the expert guides
   c. he skiied in the Olympics
   d. of his difficulty in mountain climbing

5. True or False? Safety rules are stressed in the tests because guides are responsible for their employer's lives. _____

6. Being a guide is _____.
   a. easy b. exciting c. boring d. worthless

7. The main idea of this story is_____.
   a. the adventures of a mountain climbing guide
   b. a narrow escape
   c. two mountain climbers on the Alps
   d. taking a long climb with the "guide chief"

8. The author wrote this story to _____.
   a. describe the French Alps
   b. stress safety rules
   c. encourage mountain climbing
   d. describe the importance of helping others

9. Why do you think the Alpine people have the "law" that no guide should come back from the mountains without his employer?_____
   a. because the guide would not get paid
   b. because guides are excellent climbers
   c. because employers have faith in their guides to take care of them on the mountain
   d. because the mountains are not good places to live

10. The author intended for the title "High Adventure" to have two meanings, _____.
   a. expensive and tall
   b. expensive and drunk
   c. height and exciting
   d. drunk and happy

Excerpted and adapted from Elting, Mary ( 1971), The First Book of Nurses. New York: Franklin Watts, 12-15.

Ever since she was a little girl, Stephanie Brown has wanted to be a nurse. Her teachers think she will be a good one, too. She is cheerful and healthy, and she is very patient. She doesn't get nervous when unexpected things happen. Best of all, she likes people.

Now that Stephanie is eighteen years old and has graduated from high school, she can go to nursing school. One friend, Joanne, whom she meets in nursing school says, "Just wait till you meet Mrs. Chase!"

"Who's Mrs. Chase?" Stephanie asks.

"Don't you know? She's your first patient. You never saw such a woman! She won't do a thing for herself. Just you wait!" And that's all Joanne would tell Stephanie.

Stephanie is a little worried. What kind of person can Mrs. Chase be? Suppose Stephanie can't take care of her properly?

But when Stephanie sees Mrs. Chase she has to laugh. Mrs. Chase is a woman size doll made especially for beginning nurses to practice on.

When regular classes begin, Stephanie and the other girls pretend that Mrs. Chase is very sick. They learn how to make her bed while she is still in it. They

learn how to gently turn her over. They find out the best way to give her a bath in bed.

In the old days, Mrs. Chase was always a stiff, hard dummy. Today Chase dolls are more like real people. They even have ears that are shaped just like yours, inside and out, so that students can learn to use an ear washing syringe properly.

After a while, Stephanie and Joanne and all the other beginning nurses practice on each other. Stephanie gives Joanne a shampoo in bed. Joanne gives Stephanie nose drops. They learn to put bandages on their friends. They learn how to take temperatures and pulses. And they all practice giving injections of pure water to each other.

When you feel sick you want your face washed carefully, so nurses must practice that too. Mrs. Chase, the large doll, can't say," Hey, stop flipping that soapy cloth in my eye!" However, a friend can and will. By practicing on Joanne, Stephanie learns to bunch a wet washcloth in her hand.

After Stephanie has been a student has been a student nurse for about six weeks, she has her first chance to help with real nursing work. She helps patients wash and she rubs their backs when they feel tired. In the beginning, a nurse - teacher always stands by Stephanie, but, as soon as she has passed a test in each job, she is ready to go on alone.

**The First Book of Nurses - Comprehension Questions**

1. Stephanie would make a good nurse because_____.
   a. she is mean and nasty
   b. she is careful, but selfish
   c. she is very nervous
   d. she is cheerful and healthy

2. Stephanie's first patient is _____.
   a. Joanne
   b .Mrs. Chase
   c. Mrs. Manhattan
   d. a real person

3. Stephanie can go on and work alone when _____.
   a. she gives big pills to Joanne
   b. she has passed a test in each job
   c. she puts soap into a patient's eyes
   d. she finally gets sick

4. Chase dolls are used_____.
   a. instead of real people
   b. to give injections
   c. for the nurse to play with
   d. to take enormous pills

5. True or False? Nursing students practice on each other because they are always getting sick._____

6. The main idea of this story is_____.
   a. Stephanie unpacks her suitcase.
   b. Stephanie goes to nursing school
   c. Mrs. Chase is a large doll
   d. Stephanie and Joanne give each other injections

7. Becoming a nurse is _____.
   a. boring b. easy c. worthless d. difficult

8. Why do you think Stephanie wanted to become a nurse?_____
   a. because she wanted to help people
   b. because she like Mrs. Chase
   c. because she liked to play with dolls
   d. because she was afraid of injections

9. This story is a _____.
   a. fairy tale
   b. mystery story
   c. true - to - life story
   d. science fiction story

10. The author wrote this story to_____.
    a. discourage people from becoming nurses
    b. describe what happens in a hospital
    c. encourage people to become doctors
    d. describe the many things nurses learn to do in school

## Appendix B - Data List

| Sample # | Non-Traditional Sex Roles | Traditional Sex Roles |
|---|---|---|
| Females | 6 stories/ total 60 questions | 6 stories/ total 60 questions |
| # 1 | 45 | 41 |
| # 2 | 52 | 52 |
| # 3 | 50 | 56 |
| # 4 | 52 | 41 |
| # 5 | 56 | 55 |
| # 6 | 51 | 51 |
| # 7 | 57 | 51 |
| # 8 | 52 | 55 |
| # 9 | 50 | 42 |
| # 10 | 59 | 54 |
| # 11 | 53 | 55 |
| # 12 | 44 | 47 |
| # 13 | 51 | 43 |
| #14 | 40 | 50 |
| # 15 | 39 | 52 |
| # 16 | 47 | 59 |
| # 17 | 50 | 51 |

| Sample # | Non-Traditional Sex Roles | Traditional Sex Roles |
|---|---|---|
| # 18 | 42 | 54 |
| # 19 | 54 | 49 |
| # 20 | 40 | 47 |
| **Males** | | |
| # 21 | 54 | 54 |
| # 22 | 49 | 56 |
| # 23 | 56 | 51 |
| # 24 | 59 | 41 |
| # 25 | 44 | 56 |
| # 26 | 40 | 55 |
| # 27 | 57 | 56 |
| # 28 | 47 | 56 |
| # 29 | 45 | 57 |
| # 30 | 56 | 41 |
| # 31 | 43 | 59 |
| # 32 | 56 | 55 |
| # 33 | 41 | 54 |
| # 34 | 41 | 51 |

| Sample # | Non- Traditional Sex Roles | Traditional Sex Roles |
|---|---|---|
| # 35 | 45 | 55 |
| # 36 | 43 | 53 |
| # 37 | 52 | 57 |
| # 38 | 54 | 49 |
| # 39 | 45 | 59 |
| # 40 | 46 | 52 |